

In re: Sinclair Broadcasting's "documentary" on John Kerry: It's not a documentary; it's an undisguised attack ad...

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair has claimed that they're giving Kerry a chance to 'rebut' on-air- but only under THEIR terms and conditions (this also might let them weasel around the "equal time" requirement- something they're definitely in breach of). Fine. I think Kerry should appear on their program- but only if they're planning on running Fahrenheit 9/11 or "Going Upriver"- and having George W. Bush get interviewed by, oh, say Michael Moore or Al Franken. Now THAT would be 'equal time'...

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.